

Billings City Administrator Weekly Report

May 12, 2022

1. **FY23 Proposed Budget** – The FY23 Proposed Budget is available online at <https://www.ci.billings.mt.us/475/Budgets-Financial-Reports>. Budget presentations began on May 2nd and continue this Monday and Tuesday in the City Council chambers. The introduction on page 1-14 provides a great overview of the proposed budget. Individual departments will be presenting on the following days:

Department Budget Presentation	Overview Page in FY23 Budget Book	Date	Time for Presentation & Q&A	Start Time	End Time
Aviation/Transit	51	16-May	30	5:30	6:00
Building/Facilities	26 & 31	16-May	45	6:00	6:45
Public Works	150	16-May	75	6:45	8:00
COUNCIL RECESS		16-May	10	8:00	8:10
TBID	193	16-May	20	8:15	8:35
BID	189	16-May	20	8:35	8:55

Department Budget Presentation	Overview Page in FY23 Budget Book	Date	Time for Presentation & Q&A	Start Time	End Time
Planning/CE/CDBG	125	17-May	45	5:30	6:15
IT	91	17-May	25	6:15	6:40
TIF	70	17-May	45	6:40	7:25
COUNCIL RECESS		17-May	10	7:25	7:35
Wrap-Up & Council Direction		17-May	90	7:40	9:10

2. **Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee (CJCC)** – This afternoon Chief St. John, myself and representatives from Municipal Court and the City Attorney’s office attended this month’s CJCC meeting. This is the first in-person meeting of the larger group since 2020. The meeting was

well attended by all those working in the criminal justice system in Billings (city, county, state & private service providers). We discussed coordination among the entities including, but not limited to, jail over-crowding, the public defender office, probation & parole monthly visits to sober living houses, and data to improve decision making and inform one another and the public on bottle necks in the system.

3. **National Citizen Survey** – Starting June 14th 2,800 random households will be invited to take the National Citizen Survey. A link for open participation will occur on July 19th. Data collection will wrap up on August 2nd and the results will be reported back to the City on August 30th. Billings residents previously took this survey in 2016, 2012 and 2009. Therefore, the data will be compared to other cities and our own previous results.
4. **BBWA Emergency Planning Meeting** –Wednesday afternoon critical City and County staff met to discuss the BBWA ditch issues. With all the anticipated rain this week, we've placed a temporary camera trailer in Swords Park to watch the ditch.
5. **Terrace Estates Tour** – Wednesday late afternoon staff, councilmembers, property owners and interested citizens toured Terrace Estates to look at the proposed land exchange of parkland located within the subdivision.
6. **From the PIO's Desk** – This section of the weekly will include links to the latest stories and projects created by our public information officer.

There was a big turnout for the recreation center open house. See what attendees had to say here - <https://www.ci.billings.mt.us/DocumentCenter/View/47029/Community-shares-thoughts-shows-big-interest-in-Billings-Multi-Generational-Community-Recreation-Center-PDF>

Code Enforcement recently teamed up with treatment court to clean up properties. Read how the group gave back to their community here - <https://www.ci.billings.mt.us/DocumentCenter/View/47030/Giving-back-to-their-community-Drug-treatment-court-volunteers-clean-up-property-left-behind-by-antique-collector>

What's behind the overcrowding at the Yellowstone County Detention Facility? The mayor and council were invited to take a tour to find out - <https://ci.billings.mt.us/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2301>

The Billings Firefighters Union invited the PIO to attend Fire OPS 101 in Washington state. Learn more about the program here - <https://youtu.be/XowRpZHAO18>

Find out how Victoria did at Fire OPS and how it changed her perspective and appreciation of the fire department here - <https://youtu.be/1FHAId7wl-o>

7. **Questions and Answers Section** – This new section of the Weekly is to compile the questions our staff receives from council members. City staff is including responses to emails received this week, so other city council members have the information.

Question 1 (CM Rupsis):

I received a call from resident at 3134 Lynn Ave. He reported that his green container was destroyed by the collection truck, presumably because something was stuck in there. Anyway, he called in and was told that it would be several weeks before a replacement could be delivered. That sounded odd to me, but I figure I might not have heard of some supply chain issues, seasonal workloads, or some other cause for such a delay. Can you let me know what normal expectations for replacement timeframe would be and if there are unusual circumstances nowadays that might impact that?

Question 1 Response:

To your question about normal expectation for replacements, if we were fully staffed and we had the typical amount of people wanting containers, we can deliver within a few days. When a container is damaged and can't be used, it usually moves up to the front of the line so that timeframe is usually a day or so. If you have the phone number for the resident, we can ask him a few questions about the container and schedule an appropriate replacement.

To answer your more general question about cause, we have been struggling to get adequate staff at Solid Waste for a long time. We have seven (7) vacancies of the 11 seasonal positions that we need and we have four (4) full time driver vacancies. Everything we do comes down to people and without people, we can't get everything done as quickly as we would like. We have been able to modify service, use people from other PW Divisions, and move routes/drivers around for a while now to meet the service demands but we just don't have enough people to even do that anymore. We've made the decision that the priority needs to be 1) collecting garbage, 2) collecting yard waste, 3) collecting extras, 4) delivering black barrels to people who do not have them and then 5) delivering green barrels. Right now, we have our supervisors delivering containers and they are about 2 to 3 weeks behind due to the extreme demand. If we could spare a driver or two, we could get them delivered faster, but we are using every available driver to collect garbage, yard waste and extras. We have even had to contract some industrial hauling as we don't have adequate staff to do that. We've heard a lot of frustration from our customers over this "excuse" but there is nothing else we can do to make up for the staffing deficiency we have and at the end of the day, collection requires people. Staff will continue to try to find efficiencies to try to provide service at a level that both staff and our customers want.